DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 344 856 SP 033 715

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TITLE Developing a Knowledge Base for Teacher Education.
PUB DATE Nov 90
NOTE 10p.; In: Proceedings of the National Forum of the Association of Independent Liberal Arts Colleges for Teacher Education (4th, Milwaukee, WI, November 9-11, 1990); see SP 033 711.
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Change Strategies; *Curriculum Development; Educational Change; *Educational Philosophy; *Faculty Development; Higher Education; Preservice Teacher Education; Secondary Education; *Teacher Education Curriculum; Teacher Improvement
IDENTIFIERS *Concordia College Saint Paul MN; *Knowledge Base for Teaching

ABSTRACT

The paper describes how Concordia College (Minnesota) restructured its teacher education programs, beginning with secondary education, to develop a knowledge base for teacher education. Data from a survey of employers of first year graduates, from a survey of the graduates themselves, and from comments collected from students and the teachers working with them were reviewed along with previous evaluations of the school's programs. Student and faculty goals as well as research on education were examined and the existing program was assessed. A philosophy statement which emphasized faculty beliefs about teacher education was drafted, and all secondary education faculty agreed on developing a teacher education program based on the concept of reflective teaching. The faculty wrote six disposition statements to form the parameters of the teacher education program and created objectives to help develop the stated dispositions in students. Faculty members translated the developing knowledge base into college courses and experiences, integrating the professional education component of teacher education within the liberal arts curriculum and making it the focus of a significant amount of academic programming. Programs were designed in three clusters, each with a field-based component; students worked with at least two professors per cluster. An outline of the Concordia cluster program is included. (Contains 17 references) (SM)

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Developing a Knowledge Base for Teacher Education

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The faculty at Concordia College began to develop its current knowledge base in the fall of 1986. As the faculty in the education department at Concordia College began to think about the process we should use to develop a revised and better articulated knowledge base for our teacher education programs, we first had to think about what being a liberal arts college meant to us, why historically the preparation of teachers had been important to Concordia, what strengths we had within the college faculty and within the education department faculty, what resources we had available to us, and what were the strengths and weaknesses were in our current programs.

In the fall of 1986, the dialog about a knowledge base for teacher education was in its infancy. The term *knowledge base* was used in the new standards for accreditation by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. Within those standards, the term knowledge base was not explicitly defined but its definition was implied throughout the first five standards. A knowledge base for teacher education was to be based on research findings and was to be integrated throughout the teacher education program to provide coherence between the stated program goals and objectives and program components. We inferred from the NCATE standards that a teacher education program should be well conceptualized around a central philosophy of what a teacher is and does. Further we inferred that all teacher education faculty, including the participating classroom teachers from the K-12 schools, should understand and support the central philosophy of the program and should know the educational theories and research that undergird the teacher education program. Finally, we inferred that the knowledge base as we conceptualized and articulated it would not only influence the content of our courses but would influence the methodology we use to teach those courses and the processes we use to assess students throughout the teacher education program.

Warren Bennis, in his series of books on academic leadership, discusses the conditions most optimum for change in academia (Bennis, 1989). We began, in 1986, with as close to ideal circumstances as possible to begin to restructure our teacher education programs: we had two new faculty in our professional secondary education program and had only one faculty who had been in the secondary program longer than a decade; we had three faculty who had been in the elementary program less than five years and again only one who had been there for longer than a decade; the number of students in both programs was growing and we anticipated adding new faculty to each program; the NCATE Redesign was well underway and we were planning for the BOE review in 1990; and the Minnesota Board of Teaching had begun a process to reconceptualize teacher education programs and processes for licensing teachers in Minnesota. Therefore, we were in the midst of many contexts indicating the need for change in teacher education programs and we were a faculty who had enough maturity and longevity to ensure that our teacher education program was being designed within the institutional context and we also had new enthusiastic faculty who recently completed doctoral programs and had few ties to the old way of doing things. I thought that if we were ever going to restructure our programs, now was the time to do it!

We began with the secondary education program and it is the changes in that program that I would like to address in this paper. It seemed important to start from where we were. Therefore, we began by having each of the secondary eduction faculty present his or her course for

SP033 715

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discussion. We discussed the content of each course, resources (texts, media, theorists, etc.) used in each course, goals, assignments, methods of instruction and evaluation of student achievement. Faculty were encouraged to assess what was most important to the students and to the instructor about each course.

Then we reviewed data we had from a survey of employers of first year graduates, from a survey of the graduates themselves, and from informal comments faculty had collected from students and classroom teachers who work with our students. We also reviewed previous NCATE and Minnesota Board of Teaching evaluations of our programs.

It was important to us that our teacher education programs represented the broader philosophy and commitments of the college. In reviewing college documents, we particularly focused on a document called *An Agenda for Concordia's Academic Life*, which was published in 1984. *An Agenda* set forth Concordia's separate, yet connected, goals for student academic life and expectations for the faculty. It described in elegant prose the purpose of the Core Curriculum for all students and challenged faculty in the academic disciplines to incorporate "across the curriculum" goals (such as computer literacy, inclusive education and writing) within each major program. *An Agenda* described both cognitive knowledge needed by an educated college graduate and encouraged faculty to adopt a *scholar-teacher* role in which they would not only know the content of their discipline but also model the processes of inquiry characteristic of each discipline. As we later wrote our philosophy statements and dispositions for the elementary and secondary programs, *An Agenda* became the foundation on which the teacher education programs grew.

We also felt it was important to examine the criticisms of education and teacher education and they were certainly easy to find in 1986-87. We spent several meetings (we met approximately one and a half hour every other week for two years) discussing recent reports on the failures of education (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; Task Force on Teacher Education for Minnesota's Future, 1986). We shared information that each of us had gleaned from state, regional and national professional meetings; and we reviewed written texts, handbooks of research (Wittrock, 1986; Reynolds, 1989; Smith, 1983), and research findings about the content and process of teacher education (Minnesota Department of Education, 1989; American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1989; Stallings, 1983).

Once we felt secure that we had adequately assessed our old program and had surveyed sufficient recent literature on teacher education, we obtained faculty development money from our institution to attend conferences presented by AACTE on the knowledge base for teacher education and individual faculty secured faculty development money to investigate the concerns of first year graduates and the possibilities of an induction program for first year teachers.

It was finally time to put some thoughts to paper. By this time both James Raths (University of Vermont) and Roger Pankratz and Gary Galluzzo (Western Kentucky University) had given several workshops for AACTE on processes that institutions could use to develop a knowledge base. From their presentations, we believed it was important for us to think about the big picture of our goals and philosophy of the overall program before we structured specific responsibilities of individual courses. Professors are much more willing to talk about change if it doesn't affect what we do on a day-to-day basis. It was very important to gain faculty commitment to the goals of a total secondary education program. Then peer pressure could be used in a positive manner to assist faculty in developing new courses and changing existing courses that would support the overall goals.

As one might expect, change comes with less trepidation to some faculty than others. Therefore, it was important that we use the strengths of each faculty as we went through the

process, so that each one would feel ownership in the process. One of our faculty had considerable writing experience, so we assigned her the task of writing the first draft of the philosophy statement. One faculty had experience with larger institutions where written policies, particularly relating to the clinical experiences, were very important. Another faculty was more analytic and was more useful to the group as he began to identify specific goals/objectives for the program. Another was the historian for the group and reminded us of past pitfalls and efforts that had resulted in good collaboration with colleagues in the college and in the public schools. And finally, a faculty who joined us when we were well into the process contributed research from her recent graduate school experience.

When the first draft of the philosophy statement was completed, I was more disappointed than pleased. The philosophy statement was less a statement describing the characteristics of the teacher we were hoping to prepare than it was a statement of the beliefs of the secondary professional education faculty about the process of educating a teacher. Another disappointment was the fact that the only citation was a writer in one of the disciplines, not a commonly known researcher in teacher education. Furthermore, the thoughts as written down looked more like the individualistic approach to internalizing formal education of the 1960's and 70's than it reflected the more recent research of the 1980's. I was very frustrated with where our year-long efforts had led us.

As so often happens, the philosophy statement turned out to be much more useful to us than I had originally thought it would. Each of the secondary professional education faculty rewrote the original draft and in its final revision it is a very remarkable statement which served us well throughout the design of our program. It still emphasizes the beliefs of the faculty about teacher education. These commonly held beliefs enabled us to focus our discussions on the purposes and processes for clinical and field based experiences more quickly and with more agreement than could be expected. It also facilitated the discussions we had about our own pedagogy which could have been very divisive had we not had written our philosophy before we discussed the delivery of instruction. Through the process of writing the philosophy statement it became clear that we were agreed to developing our teacher education program around the concept of a *reflective teacher*. The reflective teacher is one who makes daily decisions based on active, consistent and careful consideration of the underlying knowledge and the consequences to which these decisions may lead (Zeichner and Liston, 1987). A reflective teacher has the necessary framework of pedagogical theory, problem solving skills and clinical experiences necessary for self-directed improvement and future, full and effective participation in the teaching progression (Billups and Rauth, 1987).

While writing the second draft of the philosophy statement, we began to identify what we called dispositions, statements that characterize the actions of first year teachers based on behaviors, knowledge and attitudes. We wanted to have a few broad dispositions which would be known to all faculty (and hopefully students) and upon which all faculty could build their courses. We saw the philosophy statement and the dispositions as the vehicle through which we would achieve coherence within our secondary professional education program.

Our faculty had been very suspicious of the term *knowledge base*. To some, it meant that there was a secret curriculum waiting to be imposed on them. To others, it seemed to be a term that negated all the good things they had been teaching and doing in the past. It became obvious, that if we were going to have a high quality secondary education program, we would have to find some way to build faculty confidence in their ability to move into the 1990's with a curriculum that was based on recent research but also retained the best of past efforts.

In about 1977, the secondary education faculty, in collaboration with the faculty in other academic departments who teach special method courses for us, wrote a very lengthy set of discrete competencies. Each competency was to be addressed and developed in specifically identified courses. The 1977 list of competencies became the link between the new research-based curriculum and the older, more familiar competencies for our program.

As we used the 1977 list of competencies to begin writing the disposition statements for our new program, the faculty's confidence grew that they would be making decisions that would affect the academic program and that their work would not be eventually replaced with a curriculum mandated from an outside source. The 1977 list of competencies also gave credence to what had been the good parts of our old program. The six disposition statements that form the parameters of our teacher education program are the following:

I. Competent beginning teachers use their knowledge of education as an academic discipline which has philosophical, historical, sociological and psychological foundations.

II. Competent beginning teachers value and understand the learner by developing a working knowledge of the following: a. understand the contributions and life styles of various cultures; b. respect and understand human diversity and personal rights; and c. know and recognize student health concerns.

III. Competent beginning teachers understand the structure of knowledge and the formulation of new knowledge.

IV. Competent beginning teachers have developed and use a repertoire of teaching skills to use in the classroom: a. planning; b. student-teacher relationships; c. instructional strategies; d. diagnostic, remedial and enrichment experiences; e. assessment, evaluation and reporting; f. classroom management; and g. technology and media.

V. Competent beginning teachers understand the total school program and can cooperate in the following: a. personal and professional interaction with the school staff; b. extra- and co-curricular activities; and c. school-community relations.

VI. Competent beginning teachers are practicing, emerging professionals who a. understand the importance of continuing study and self-evaluation for professional growth; b. accept responsibility for a high standard of ethical/professional conduct; and c. understand current political and educational issues affecting teachers.

As we developed the six dispositions, we also made changes in the original philosophy statement. We found that each part of the process for change affected others and that we would often return to parts of the process we thought we had finished.

Our next step was to write objectives that would help us to develop the stated dispositions in our students. We also began to identify researchers, theorists and resources that could and should be associated with each of the objectives.

The process of selecting the research and theories to which we would introduce our students was an important step in advancing the commitment of our faculty to use recent research in teacher education. After my initial disappointment with the philosophy statement, I approached this stage with considerable concern. However, this time, I was quite pleasantly surprised. Although some were more committed to the process, all of the faculty were engaged on a review of the recent research in education. The list of researchers from whom we began to build our

curriculum is too long to cite. However, we included both current and "classical" researchers and theorists from qualitative and quantitative perspectives. Much of the newer process-product research in teaching was included as well as theorists on cognition. Overall, I was delighted in the advance toward a research-based curriculum.

About this time, I became convinced that designing a new program is developmental. We would advance but not reach perfection. I knew that the redesigning of our programs would take a sustained effort, not only while we were implementing the new program but also after the new program was in place.

Now it was time to think about translating our developing knowledge base into college courses and experiences. This was the point at which I knew we would face the greatest obstacles. As faculty began to realize that they may be responsible to teach some content with which they were not familiar, I feared that they would lose their commitment to the overall goals of the program. Once again, we obtained faculty development money for one faculty member to attend a summer workshop, another to participate in a summer program related to her new responsibilities and a third took courses within her doctoral program that would compliment her new responsibilities.

In designing our courses, we felt it was important for the professional education component of teacher education to be integrated within the liberal arts curriculum and to be the focus of a significant amount of the student's academic program for at least three semesters. We also wanted to develop cohorts of students and faculty who would would together in each of the three semesters. Therefore, we designed the program in three clusters as described on the following page.

In each cluster, the students would work with at least two professors and each cluster included a field-based component. Having spent most of our attention on the theoretical aspects of the program, we now turned our attention to the clinical and field-based components. While it may have been more appropriate to incorporate the clinical dispositions within the professional education dispositions and objectives, we wrote a separate set of dispositions for the clinical and field-based experiences. We also cited the research and theories upon which the clinical dispositions were based. Then we wrote specific objectives for each of the three clusters to assure that the overall dispositions would be attained. Keeping the clinical experiences separate facilitated the later study of our evaluations of the students' clinical performance.

The philosophy statement, professional education dispositions and objectives, field-based experience dispositions and objectives, and liberal arts dispositions made a very nice package with which to begin our discussions with the Teacher Advisory Committee, which is our extended secondary education faculty--the special methods college faculty and the classroom teachers who work with our field-based students. At our first meeting, we found that they, too, seemed irritated with the term *knowledge base* and knew that they would have less commitment to a long term discussion of the philosophy and dispositions we had developed.

At our second TAC meeting that year, we shared three brief "readings" about reflective teaching (Schon, 1983; Zeichner, 1987; Liston and Zeichner, 1987) that we felt capsulized our beliefs on reflective teaching. We asked that each special methods faculty assess their special methods course in light of the dispositions, objectives and cited research and theories we had presented. They were to begin to plan how their own special methods courses could build upon the general courses for all secondary education students. They were also asked to identify research and theories within their individual disciplines that they would develop in their special methods courses. Since the cluster two field-based experience was also under the direction of the special methods faculty, they were asked to consider the clinical and field-based dispositions in designing

their field-based experiences. Following this meeting, I, as chair of the education department, met individually with special methods faculty as they revised their special methods courses.

Concordia College Secondary/K-12 Teacher Education Program

Cluster I

Course	Title	Credit
Ed 219	Reflective Teaching: A Foundation	2 sem hrs
Ed 220	Ecology of the Educational Setting	2 sem hrs
Psy 112	Introductory Psychology	4 sem hrs

Ed 219 and 220 are taken concurrently. A 20-hour field-based experience accompanies these two courses. Students are encouraged to take Psy 112 the same semester that they take Ed 219 and 220.

Cluster II

Course	Title	Credit
Ed 349	Knowledge, Literacy and Inquiry	2 sem hrs
Ed 350	The Art and Science of Teaching	2 sem hrs
Special Methods Course(s)		2-4 sem hrs
Ed 399	Orientation to Student Teaching	No credit

Ed 349 and 350 are taught concurrently. Students are encouraged to take at least one of the special methods courses during the semester in which they take Ed 349 and 350. A field-based experience of at least 20 hours accompanies the special methods course.

Ed 399 is a course in which the administrative concerns for student teaching are addressed. The director of secondary clinical experiences meets four times with the prospective student teachers, discusses policies for placing students in schools, introduces "A Resource for the Student Teaching Programs" and identifies the student teaching placements after the students complete the necessary paperwork.

Cluster III

Course	Title	Credit
Ed 4xx	Student Teaching	10 sem hrs
Ed 439	Human Relations and Drug Education	2 sem hrs
Ed 469	Professional Issues	2 sem hrs

Students complete their student teaching assignment during the first ten weeks of the semester. For the remaining five-to-six weeks of the semester, secondary/K-12 students complete Ed 439 and 469. The course number for "Student Teaching" in the secondary/K-12 programs differs for administrative purposes, allowing identification of licensure levels and content areas. All secondary/K-12 student teachers adhere to equivalent policies and procedures.

Later in the year, the special methods faculty became more comfortable with the term *knowledge base* and both the special methods faculty and the classroom teachers were more comfortable in their own ability to describe a reflective teacher. We reviewed some of our field-based experience evaluation forms to assess compatibility with our new model and to assure that they contained appropriate criteria for evaluation of students' performance. Several revisions were made.

The discussions with the TAC and within the education department turned to the methodology that we, as college faculty, would use in our courses to model the methodology that we wanted our students to learn. We believed that we should be more explicit with our students in identifying the methodology that we were using. We began to classify our methodology using the categories of Joyce and Weil (1986). Then we developed a syllabus format in which faculty identified the objectives of their course and cited the major research or theories that they planned to use. We also identified our teaching methodology and processes of student evaluation. Through identifying our methodology on the syllabi we were encouraging more discussions with our students about our purposes for using specific methods for each class. Once again, I met with several of the special methods faculty individually as they prepared their syllabi for their special methods courses.

Once we had an agreement among all the major players, we presented our new secondary professional education program the the Education Department, Curriculum Committee and Faculty Senate for official approval. Following the on-campus approval process, we sent the new program to the Minnesota Board of Teaching. We attained approval at all levels in 1988-89 and began the new program in 1989-90 academic year.

During the 1988-89 academic year, the design was complete but we found that the newly designed program necessitated changes in our admission and retention process and we also identified some new resources that we needed to support our program. We held an all-campus faculty workshop in the summer of 1989 to familiarize the college faculty with our new model and also share some of the research on methodology that we would be introducing to students. We hoped that they, too, would adopt some of the methodology that we discussed at the workshop since a part of our philosophy is that all college faculty model methods of instruction.

During 1988-89, we wrote our NCATE Institutional Report proudly documenting the new secondary education program. Responding to the standards was surprisingly easy. It was amazing to us that our design of our program affected our responses to so many of the standards (Gideonse, 1988), obviously those in the Knowledge Base Category, but also Standard II A, Clinical and Field-Based Experiences; Standard II B, Relationship with Graduates; Standard II C, Relationship with the Schools; Standard III A, Admission of Students; Standard III B, Monitoring Students Progress;Standard III D, Exit from the Programs; Standard IV C, Faculty Development; and Standard V B, Resources.

In February, 1990, and NCATE Board of Examiners visited our campus and in June Concordia College was officially granted NCATE accreditation. All of the faculty effort had been recognized and now the satisfaction of being able to deliver a quality program to future teachers stands before us.

Resources

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